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Letter dated 20 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia of 19 August 2002, in response to the interview of the Ambassador for Special Assignments, V. Kolotusha, with the Russian Information Agency "Novosti" of 12 August 2002, concerning the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Revaz **Adamia**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 20 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Georgia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Russian]

Statement by the Official Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

The interview given on 12 August 2002 by the "Special Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation", the Ambassador for Special Assignments, Mr. Vasily Kolotusha, to the Russian Information Agency "Novosti" concerning the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, did not go unnoticed in Tbilisi.

It seems that the arguments adduced by the "Special Representative" in this interview are nothing other than an attempt to justify the inconsistent actions of the Russian side with respect to the problems of resolving the conflict and the destructive position of the separatist regime in Abkhazia.

In particular, the steps taken by the Russian side of late run counter not only to the well-known position of President Vladimir Putin, but also to that of the international community concerning the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia. The intensification of the contacts between the representatives of the official Russian authorities and the separatist regime, the establishment of comprehensive contacts between the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and the self-proclaimed republic, the introduction of a visa regime that discriminates against Georgia, and the campaign, unprecedented in international practice, to give Russian citizenship en masse to the inhabitants of Abkhazia, Georgia, are regarded in Tbilisi as an infringement of sovereignty and a deliberate show of disrespect towards a neighbouring State.

It should be noted, in this connection, that a Russian Government delegation composed of high-ranking representatives of the Presidential administration and of the Government of the Russian Federation visited Abkhazia in early August. Despite repeated appeals to the Russian side for an explanation in respect of this occurrence, no clear answer has been received in Tbilisi.

In addition, it is worth recalling that the facts cited are nothing other than a blatant violation of the commitments entered into by the States members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), including the Russian Federation, in accordance with the decision of the CIS Council of Heads of State of 19 January 1996. It is precisely such steps by the Russian side and the contradictory nature of its statements and actions that determine the harshness and implacability of the positions of the Abkhaz separatists.

At the very least, Mr. Kolotusha's statement concerning the causes of the conflict is incorrect. By virtually accusing Georgia of starting the armed conflict, he openly justifies "the natural reaction" of the Abkhaz separatists, namely, the undermining of Georgia's territorial integrity and the ethnic cleansing which they carried out. Statements that "the Georgian side has raised only one issue — the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia — to an absolute, whereas there are other aspects, including the humanitarian situation in Abkhazia" are bewildering. In this connection, the "Special Representative" should be reminded that sovereignty

and territorial integrity are the basic foundations of any State, including the Russian Federation.

With regard to the humanitarian aspects of the problem, to which Mr. Kolotusha gives special attention, we wish to underline that the Georgian side has never refused the implementation of humanitarian projects in this region of Georgia, provided that they are coordinated with it. Most regrettably, the "Special Representative" for some reason neglected to mention the fate of the 300,000 refugees and displaced persons who were driven out of Abkhazia, Georgia, by the separatists and the forces supporting them and who find themselves today in the most difficult of conditions as they await the settlement of this protracted conflict. Clearly, Mr. Kolotusha does not class this problem as a humanitarian one.

Of particular interest is the part of the interview where Mr. Kolotusha discusses the so-called Boden document prepared by the group of Friends of the Secretary-General on Georgia and approved by the United Nations Security Council. Here, the "Special Representative" attempts to lay all the blame for the Abkhaz side's refusal to consider these proposals on Georgia, accusing it of not fulfilling the 1994 agreements.

Mr. Kolotusha shows the utmost candour in explaining the position taken by the representative of the Russian Federation at a recent meeting of the United Nations Security Council and the refusal of the Russian side to use its influence on the Abkhaz side to convince it to accept the Boden document, declaring word for word that: "There can be no question of putting any pressure on the Abkhaz side. This has to do with the fact that, first, Georgia's own conduct has not been above reproach either and, second, in the current context of Russian-Georgian relations, such actions would be incomprehensible and unacceptable to our public opinion".

In the light of the above, the following question arises: **are the opinions and conclusions of the "Special Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation" a reflection of his personal position, or is the Russian side reviewing its fundamental approaches to the settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia, Georgia, including the decision of the CIS Council of Heads of State of 19 January 1996?**

Tbilisi, 19 August 2002

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Letter dated 20 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Further to the letter dated 19 August 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/941), and on instructions from my Government, I have the honour to outline the position of the Government of Rwanda in the light of what the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and its Permanent Representative to the United Nations refer to as "large-scale military operations which Rwanda has been conducting for several days in the Congolese province of South Kivu".

The allegations by the Congolese Government constitute further proof of its bad faith in addressing the crisis that has been afflicting the Great Lakes region for four years. While the Government of Rwanda has never ceased to demonstrate its commitment to withdraw its troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo once its security concerns have been acknowledged and taken into consideration by the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the international community, the Congolese Government has not made any gesture on the ground to help restore the climate of confidence between our respective Governments. Here are a few acts that demonstrate the lack of commitment by the Congolese Government to the implementation of the Pretoria Agreement:

(1) Since the signing of the Pretoria Agreement, the Congolese Government has continued supporting the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias;

(2) The Congolese Government has continued dropping weapons and ammunition in the areas of Kazimya, Lulimba, Salamabila, Minembwe and Nzovu. Those areas are well known by MONUC and the Joint Military Commission as positions of the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias;

(3) Several documents (identity cards of the Congolese armed forces) seized on the battlefield prove that the Congolese armed forces are involved alongside the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias;

(4) The extremely venomous and provocative political statements by the Congolese Government are not helping to calm the situation and normalize relations between our two countries, as witness the statements by the Congolese Minister for

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Foreign Affairs before the Security Council on 8 August 2002, during the meeting on the Pretoria Peace Agreement.

As a result of the situation being perpetuated by the Congolese authorities, the threats from the coalition between the former armed forces of Rwanda, the Interahamwe militias and the Congolese armed forces are continuing to pose a threat to Rwanda. The Rwandan Government is thus obliged to fight them in their South Kivu strongho'ds so as to prevent them from crossing the Rwandan border.

It is obvious from the preceding that the Congolese Government is failing to honour its promises under the Pretoria Peace Agreement and is violating paragraphs 6, 7, 8.1, 8.2 and 8.10, which constitute indispensable conditions for the restoration of peace in the Great Lakes region.

The Congolese Government, fearing that the Government of Rwanda might refer the matter to a third party, has rushed to portray itself as the victim of a situation of its own making, with the unavowed aim of sowing confusion and vindicating itself in the eyes of the third party and in the eyes of the international community. This is a case of the wolf itself crying wolf.

In the light of the above, the Government of Rwanda reiterates its firm commitment to a comprehensive peace in the Great Lakes region and its commitment to withdraw its troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo once the threat from the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias has been removed.

In the meantime, my Government calls on the Security Council:

(1) To put pressure on the Congolese authorities to behave like responsible politicians who respect their commitments to their neighbours and to the international community;

(2) To get the Congolese authorities to respect all the provisions of the Pretoria Peace Agreement, specifically the provisions on Rwanda's security concerns;

(3) To pressure the Congolese Government to stop supplying weapons and ammunition to the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias;

(4) To remind the Congolese Government that it has an obligation to respect the various Security Council resolutions calling on it to cease all moral, political, material and financial support for the former armed forces of Rwanda and the Interahamwe militias.

My Government would be grateful if you could have this letter circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Anastase **Gasana**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative